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For more information, contact:

Dave Fisher - 406-444-6168

Kate Whitney - 406-444-3056

PSC ADOPTS CONSUMER PROTECTION RULES
FOR RESTRUCTURED ENERGY INDUSTRY

The state Public Service Commission has adopted rules to ensure that residential and small commercial consumers affected by utility restructuring are provided with important information and protections when they exercise choice for their supply of electricity and natural gas.

Key provisions of the rules include requirements that suppliers obtain a consumer's written authorization and provide a service contract detailing the terms and conditions of service before implementing a switch of suppliers. In order to make it easier for consumers to compare suppliers' offers, the service contract must include a uniform information label that all suppliers will use to present basic price and contract information.

The new consumer information and protection rules address these topics:

- o Requirements for verifying customers' choices of supplier and investigating unauthorized supplier switches;
- o Service contracts between customers and suppliers;
- o Supplier termination of a customer's service contract due to nonpayment;
- o billing;
- o Default supplier that is obligated to provide electricity or natural gas supply service to customers whose service with another supplier has been terminated, or to customers who have not yet selected a supplier;
- o Service disconnection;
- o Complaint procedures; and
- o Marketing claims by suppliers.

The rules are available on the PSC Internet website at www.psc.state.mt.us or by calling the PSC at 1-888-215-4056.

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